THE IMPACT OF COGNITIVE COACHING ON THE PARTICIPANTS AND THE DISTRICT--A STUDY CONDUCTED IN THE JOHNSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

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By Helene J. Kaplan
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Approved by Committee:

Thomas S. Westbrook, Chair

Jim Verlengia

James L. Romig
Dean of the School of Education

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An abstract of a Thesis by
Helene J. Kaplan
September 2000
Drake University
Advisor: Thomas S. Westbrook

The Problem: This research addressed the need to determine the impact of participation in the Cognitive Coaching training on the individual participants and the district in the Johnston Community School District to support future training efforts. The purpose of this study was to determine the impact by collecting data about coaching skills used, implementation including use with students, concerns, and recommendations.

Procedures: A case study approach was employed and interviews were conducted in a reflective conference format to gather data about the effects on individual participants following training. In addition, the impact on the Johnston Community School District as a result of training staff in the cognitive coaching skills was studied. The interviews/ conferences were reviewed for recurring trends in the area of skills mentioned, implementation, recommendations, and concerns.

Findings: Most of the participants interviewed found the Cognitive Coaching training to be beneficial in helping them to improve their listening skills, problem solving, and questioning skills. The training has had a positive impact on the mentor/mentee program, the evaluation model and on communication in the district between colleagues and with parents and students.

Conclusion: The district and participants are benefiting from the Cognitive Coaching efforts.

Recommendations: Further impact might be possible with additional staff training and opportunities for structured practice during the workday. Structured practice opportunities are needed to encourage skill implementation. Future research needs to compare the perceptions about the impact of Cognitive Coaching between participants and non-participants and the impact on students working with trained and untrained staff.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Cognitive Coaching was developed by Robert Garmston and Art Costa based on their experiences in education and the influences of educational researchers including Robert Anderson, Morris Cogan, and Robert Goldhammer (Clinical Supervision), John Grinder (Neuro-Linguistic programming), Reuven Feuerstein (Mediated Learning), Carl Glickman (Developmental Supervision), and Robert Sternberg (Metacognition and Intelligence). Garmston and Costa developed the Institute for Intelligent Behavior in 1985 to further the growth of the Cognitive Coaching efforts. This organization has parented the training of hundreds of educators and corporate staff worldwide.

Coaching, as defined in the book *Cognitive Coaching-- A Foundation for Renaissance Schools,* means to "convey a valued colleague from where he or she is to where he or she wants to be" (Costa & Garmston, 1994, p. 2). There are three major parts of the coaching process: a planning conference, an observation, and a reflecting conference. There is also a problem-solving component, in many ways a synthesis of all the coaching skills that is addressed during the final days of the seven-day training program.

Briefly, the goals of Cognitive Coaching are establishing and maintaining trust, facilitating mutual

learning, and enhancing growth toward holonomy, which means that individuals are acting autonomously while simultaneously acting interdependently with the group. There are five states of mind that are part of holonomy: interdependence, consciousness, flexibility, craftsmanship, and efficacy. In the coaching relationship, a skilled coach can use carefully thought out and constructed questions to mediate the coachee as he/she moves from a low state of mind to a higher state of mind (Costa & Garmston, 1994). Specifically, efficacy relates to the confidence level of educators and their beliefs that they make a difference in their work. Craftsmanship relates to skill and precision, and interdependence addresses the ability to work well within a team or group. Consciousness relates to awareness of what we do and why we do it; flexibility relates to our ability to do things in new ways.

Cognitive Coaching training begins with seven-days spread out over an extended period of time. Usually, two days are offered in the fall, two in the spring, and the final three days are scheduled for the following summer. Participants may be mentors and preservice teachers, administrators, classroom teachers, support staff or community. In addition to the seven initial days of training, there might be a follow-up component to support the initial training experience.

The Johnston Community School District has had Cognitive Coaching Training offered in the district for several

years. A total of 54 staff members have been involved in the seven-day training. The participants include central office administrators, building administrators and teachers. Two administrators and two teachers are preparing to become trainers and are now participating in the training event. Additional staff will be working towards this goal. There has been a state grant in the district to support Cognitive Coaching costs, but the grant has now expired.

Statement of the Problem

It is imperative for the Johnston school district to show evidence that the Cognitive Coaching training is having a positive impact on staff and students to encourage continued support of time and money. This research study examined the effects of participation in the Cognitive Coaching training on the individual participants and on the Johnston Community School District. The focus of this investigation or phenomenon of interest was the participation in Cognitive Coaching training and the resulting impact.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to collect data that would support the participation of educators in the seven-day training. Although the Johnston Community School District has participated in Cognitive Coaching for several years,

there has not been any program evaluation implemented. In addition, there has not been any collection of data reflecting the effectiveness of, or the impact on, staff, the district, or benefits for students as a result of staff participation in the seven days of training. Cognitive Coaching is a time consuming and costly endeavor for participants and their sponsoring districts, so it is necessary to determine the return on investment.

Research Questions

To determine the value of participation in Cognitive Coaching training for participants and a district, the following questions guided this study:

1. What skills are participants using from the training; what skills do they perceive others in the district to be using?
2. How is Cognitive Coaching being implemented as part of the Johnston Community School District's culture?
3. In what ways is training having a positive impact on students in the district?

In addition to the three research questions, two other issues were explored during the interviews to collect data about participation in Cognitive Coaching:

4. What concerns do participants have following the initial seven days of training?

5. What recommendations do participants have following the initial seven days of training?

Significance of the Research

The findings of this study will have implications for the Johnston Community School District and for individual staff. As the organization considers commitment to future Cognitive Coaching training, the results will indicate whether or not there is reason to believe that the expenditure of time and money is worthwhile for staff, districts and students.

Limitations

There are some limitations to the applicability of this research. All participants were employees of the same school district. A limitation of this study was the potential personal bias of the researcher towards the benefits of Cognitive Coaching. The researcher made every possible effort to remain objective. To minimize bias, several people were asked to review the proposed map of questions for their input before the interviews. It was very important that the coaching relationship be based on trust and rapport, as taught in the training. The researcher needed to be very sensitive to non-verbal information during the interviews and took mental note of these behaviors.

Definition of Terms

Cognitive Coaching is a nonjudgmental approach that is built around a planning conference, lesson observation, and a reflecting conference. Cognitive coaches apply specific strategies, maps, and tools to enhance another person's perceptions, decisions, and intellectual functions. At more complex levels, coaching is also the application of a set of assumptions, principles, and skills in both formal and informal interactions with faculty, students, and parents in a variety of situations. Cognitive Coaching is a form of mediation that may be applied to interactions in a variety of patterns, situations, and settings with the intention of enhancing self-directed learning in self and others.

Planning Conference Map is the basic structure of the coaching process, which may be embellished or varied by the coach. It builds trust, focuses the coach's attention on the teacher's goals, provides for a detailed mental rehearsal of the lesson, establishes the parameters of the Reflecting Conference, and promotes self-coaching. It provides an opportunity for the coachee to clarify goals and objectives, determine indicators of achievement, anticipate approaches, strategies, and decisions to achieve goals, and identify the data gathering focus and procedures.

Reflective Conference is a conference conducted when some time has elapsed between the lesson and the meeting. During the conference, the coach encourages the coachee to

summarize impressions and assessment of the event or lesson, recall supporting information, analyze, infer, and determine cause-effect relationships, construct new learnings and applications, and reflect on the coaching process and recommend refinements.

Problem-solving Map is a template for a conversation intended to mediate the movement of the coachee from an existing state to a desired state using various coaching resources including: pace (rapport, empathy, content) which results in a goal or pathway which results in a lead to a higher state of mind.

Mediational Questioning are those questions asked by the coach in a conference to help to mediate the coachee towards greater holonomous states of mind and behaviors. They are illuminating questions.

Rapport is congruence of body language, body matching, or synchronization. Elements of rapport are posture, gesture, tonality, language, and breathing.

Trust as part of Cognitive Coaching might be manifested in self, relationship, process, and/or environment.

Holonomous is defined in two parts: individuals acting autonomously while simultaneously acting interdependently with the group.

5 States of Mind are energy sources for the actualization of holonomy including efficacy, flexibility, craftsmanship, interdependence, and consciousness.

BAT is the Building Assistance Team, which is used to

screen special education requests and to assist specific students who are struggling.

BIT is the Building Improvement Team, which is funded through Phase III and is responsible for all in-services and school improvement efforts.

DIT is the District Improvement Team, which is funded through Phase III and is responsible for all district-wide in-services and school improvement efforts.

Mentor/Mentee Program connects new teachers with experienced teachers to form a relationship that will benefit both staff during the first year of employment for the new teacher. The program develops effective relationships, enhances professionalism, and impacts student achievement.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of participation in the seven days of Cognitive Coaching on participants and on the Johnston Community School District to assess the student benefits and to determine whether or not the impact warrants the cost and time investment in the future. In an effort to find support for continuing participation, the literature on this topic was reviewed. The literature pertaining to research studies involving Cognitive Coaching primarily includes mentoring programs for preservice and beginning teachers, impact on administrators and classroom teachers and the benefits of having a reflective environment in an organization. The review of literature for this study is organized by the research questions of this study. The additional questions pertaining to concerns and recommendations specific to the district's efforts are also addressed.

1. Cognitive Coaching Skills-- What skills are participants using from the training; what skills do they perceive others in the district to be using?

In the interviews conducted for this study, one of the main modes of implementation in the Johnston School District is the mentoring program. There is an extensive component of Cognitive Coaching in the training for the mentors and the beginning teachers. There is also follow-up

training during the first year of teaching and the planning and reflective maps are used in the coaching relationship. It is through the mentoring program that many of the Cognitive Coaching skills are evident.

One of the Cognitive Coaching skills is the application of the five states of mind to the mentor/mentee relationship. This effort is supported in the literature. In discussing how to assess the results of using cognitive coaching as an approach to assisting mentors in their efforts to mediate the thinking of their protégés, Barnett (1995) suggests using the five states of mind as a tool. A mentor may observe, question, and coach the protégé in an effort to determine the states of mind levels throughout their relationship. When the coach perceives that the protégé is exhibiting a low state of mind during a coaching session, the coach may use his/her skills to mediate the coachee towards increased self-awareness and intensified intentionality about the choice of action.

The role of the coach is inherent in the role of mentor in that the mentor takes on the role of guiding the preservice teacher towards success without dictating the path to take. The coach mediates the coachee towards increased awareness of the reasons for their actions (Barnett, 1995; Langer & Colton, 1994; Tye & Costa, 1986). Similarly, the coach will help the student teacher build increasing independence by periodically determining where the student teacher is in the five states of mind and

mediating for growth, and this is to be accomplished with minimal criticism and maximum safety and trust (Barnett, 1995).

Generally, although teams from districts may attend Cognitive Coaching training the largest numbers of participants in Cognitive Coaching training sessions are classroom teachers. The literature is most available pertaining to the benefits of classroom teacher participation in this training as seen in increased interdependence, an increased sense of efficacy and a higher level of consciousness as they work with students, parents and colleagues.

> Teachers must not experience the "sink or swim" mentality inevitable in the "one-room schoolhouse." Instead, teachers must be made part of the team of educators existing in today's learning institutions. In order for this goal to be met, the existence and implementation of a Cognitive Coaching program to assure the long-term professional growth of the teacher is deemed invaluable. (Uzat, 1998, p. 4)

Uzat cites Showers and Joyce (1996) and describes the many different types of coaching which a classroom teacher might be involved in at times during his/her career. While some forms of coaching are aimed at innovation, cognitive coaching is more for the purpose of assisting a teacher to improve existing skills and practices (Showers & Joyce, 1996). In addition, Cognitive Coaching develops

relationships and thinking processes that enhance a teacher's skills. As the five states of mind move to a higher level, the teacher will feel more confident to implement new strategies and practices in the classroom. Furthermore, increased reflection helps educators to "stretch beyond their present capacity and become self-monitoring, self-renewing entities" (Lipton, 1993, p. 4).

In a study by Edwards and Newton (1995), the impact of Cognitive Coaching training on the classroom teacher is examined. In the study, 143 participants in two groups received training at different times, in 1991 and 1992, and a control group did not receive training. The Teacher Efficacy Scale and the Vincenz Empowerment Scale measured the results. In most cases, the results showed that those trained earlier and those who had more coaching practice had higher scores in all areas except Personal Efficacy. The researchers gathered qualitative data through interviews. They content-analyzed the material and determined that "those who took Cognitive Coaching express more positive feelings about all aspects of their experience as teachers than those who did not take Cognitive Coaching" (Edwards & Newton, 1995, p. 22).

Edwards and Newton cite Garmston's (1991) opinion that Cognitive Coaching has an impact on teacher thinking processes that ultimately result in changes in teaching methods and improved student learning. Edwards and Newton reviewed a study of 40 teachers who had participated in

peer coaching (Garmston, 1990). Their experiences resulted in increased feelings of empowerment and competency. They dialogued with colleagues more, had a higher enthusiasm level for their work, and felt transformed by their experience.

The professional dialogue of coaching can be used as a vehicle for development of a structure that encourages teachers to coach one another on curriculum issues. In a study of the use of Cognitive Coaching to implement math standards (Ray, 1998), teachers formed coaching dyads to assist with the articulation of the math curriculum and develop intervention strategies. The coaching process offered the teachers opportunities to share ideas and to elevate their own thinking as they were coached.

The four-year project involved 90% of the classroom teachers in a school district during the first year and all of the K-3 teachers the third year. During the fourth year, all teachers in the school participated. The teachers participated in the Cognitive Coaching training and took the roles of coach and coachee periodically, using the pre-lesson conference, lesson observation, and post-lesson conference. The author, who was also a participant, reported increased confidence and efficacy. Cognitive coaching helped teachers to change and reform both curriculum development and instruction. "It is a supportive process that directly combats the isolation of teaching, provides feedback, aids in reflective thought, and fosters

a collegial relationship necessary for growth" (Ray, 1998, p. 4).

A great deal of attention in the Cognitive Coaching literature is directed to the necessity of educational practitioners becoming more reflective about their work. Because reflection is considered to be a cognitive skill, we might expect that with concentrated practice and feedback, individuals could improve their reflective capacities (Barnett, 1995, pp.48, 50). This is supported by Showers and Joyce (1996) in their findings that initial training is only the beginning and must be supported by coaching to "result in a greater level of implementation than training alone" (Uzat, 1998, p. 9). "Coaching helped nearly all the teachers implement new teaching strategies. Equally important, teachers introduced to the new models could coach one another, provided that the teachers continued to receive follow-up in training settings" (Showers & Joyce, 1996, p. 14)

In a study exploring the use of reflective practice by administrators for problem-solving (Lipton, 1993), the participants were selected from a group of 55 educators from across the U.S. who had previously participated in the seven days of cognitive coaching training. The participants were attending a leadership institute where intense practice and refining of cognitive coaching skills and strategies take place. Lipton's study (1993) explored the application of skills and strategies learned in the

Cognitive Coaching training experiences to structured reflection. Seventeen administrators participated in the study and were asked to answer questions in writing that explored their use of the Cognitive Coaching tools in a previous experience. Questions of the participants were about their use of coaching language in thought, use of coaching tools, and maps for decision-making, and the transfer of knowledge and skills.

The author reports in her findings that 15 out of 17 administrators used the cognitive coaching maps and tools in their reflection and that there was an awareness of the five states of mind. There was admission of the need for more work in certain skill areas and reports of positive results from the use of certain maps and tools. The author reports that the data indicates that the participants consciously employed elements of the cognitive coaching training and that the cognitive coaching skills provided a framework for their reflection. They had more choices in their communication toolbox and were more purposeful in their reactions to situations and how they selected a solution.

2. Modes of Implementation-- how are Cognitive Coaching being implemented as part of the Johnston Community School District's culture?

In reviewing the literature pertaining to the unique relationship that exists between a preservice teacher and his/her coach/mentor, the literature supports the benefit

of participation in the Cognitive Coaching training. Similar to the findings in the interviews, there is evidence in the literature that participation in Cognitive Coaching to prepare to be a mentor has a positive impact on the teachers' personal and professional lives.

Two studies were done at the University of California-Irvine Professional Development Schools (Clinard, Ariav, Beeson, Minor, & Dwyer, 1995; Clinard et al., 1997). The first study examined how the cooperating teacher role affected their classroom practice and their professional life beyond the classroom. The study involved 172 cooperating teachers who participated in Cognitive Coaching seminars as part of the preparation for their role as cooperating teachers/mentors. Data were collected through observations and written accounts of the large group seminars and the dialogues between and among the participants. Comprehensive, summative data were collected through questionnaires. The qualitative data were coded and categorized by the author and put into a database. With a 53% response to the questionnaire, the findings indicated that there was a positive impact upon the cooperating teachers. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents provided examples of positive impact in the classroom, 4% claimed no impact, and 8% provided no answer to this question; 76% shared positive examples of the impact beyond the classroom, 6% said there was no impact, and 18% provided no answer to this question. A frequency count was tabulated

for the responses in an effort to see emerging patterns, and the study found that participants had experienced positive changes in their attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors.

The 1997 study (Clinard et al.) focused on the changing role of the cooperating teacher and the effects of coaching on their teaching and professional lives. This second study involved a second population of participants from the Beit Berl College in Israel, and all participants had Cognitive Coaching as part of their preparation. Participants in this research study were involved in various forms of data collection including informal interactions such as semi-annual dialogues, conversations, and contacts with the researchers, cooperating teachers, and university/college faculty. In addition, an end-of-year questionnaire was implemented with a 56.3% return rate in California and 44% return rate in Israel. The data were put into a database. The findings from the California participants indicated an impact on their own teaching, with little influence expressed by the Israeli group.

The study also addressed the impact of training beyond the teaching role. University of California-Irvine mentors experienced an increasing sense of professionalism and increased networking with other educators. One Beit Berl College teacher found Cognitive Coaching helpful when working with colleagues. The Cognitive Coaching approach was implemented when the data were presented to teachers in

a reflective conference. In their findings, the authors noted the limitations of using questionnaires to collect data and the need for time for mentors to develop the skills necessary to coach well. There is also a need for ongoing support for the mentors as they coach the student teachers.

Another use of Cognitive Coaching that was frequently mentioned in the interviews relates to administrative practice. In a three-year study of the use of Cognitive Coaching to prepare new administrators (Geltner, 1993), three cohort teams participated in the coaching process with their program coordinator/instructor. Data gathering methods included review of reflective papers describing their experiences with Cognitive Coaching, structured interviews, and critical incident reports that focused on the impact of coaching on their personal and professional growth. Analysis of the data found that participants were better able to link theory and practice, had a deeper understanding of their thinking, felt safe to explore solutions to problems, and felt affirmed as developing leaders (Geltner, 1993).

3. Impact on Students-- In what ways is training having a positive impact on students in the district?

There is limited literature pertaining to the impact of teacher participation in Cognitive Coaching on students. Some studies relate improved teacher skill on improved student performance. One study by McLymont and da Costa

(1998) examined the impact of Cognitive Coaching on math teachers. The project was first implemented due to low student test scores. The study examined connections between participation in Cognitive Coaching training by teachers in Jamaica and their ability to implement a more constuctivist style of teaching in their classrooms. The study followed their ability to transfer their coaching skills to their work with students. In addition, the study hypothesized that participants would reflect on their own thinking and experiences to construct new thinking that would be related to past successes and would lead to construction of better teaching strategies and reflective discourse with colleagues. This, in turn, would result in improved student performance.

Data collection included: (a) semi-structured interviews, (b) focus study groups, (c) video taped seminar series and professional development sessions, (d) audio taped coaching conferences, and (e) field notes. The authors reported seven findings: principal support is necessary, teachers should be participants in discovery learning, reflection is vital, a comfortable atmosphere can exist if the environment is non-threatening, value judgments must be absent for collaboration to take place, colleagues need to build trust through non-judgmental actions, and the math teacher can coach students to help in the same way that they are helped to stretch their own thinking through cognitive coaching experiences.

Additional literature that supports the connection between participation in the training and student benefit was developed by one of the founders of Cognitive Coaching, Bob Garmston. He reflected on his personal experience coaching two classroom teachers (Garmston, Linder, & Whitaker, 1993). Their dialogue about teaching helped the teachers to clarify their thinking and make better decisions. Both teachers reported very positive results from their coaching experiences including: "changes in teaching style, expanded teaching repertoire, greater power in planning lessons, greater student accountability, and greater consciousness of teacher behaviors and options" (Garmston et al., 1993, p. 59).

4. Concerns-- what concerns do participants have following the initial seven days of training?
5. Recommendations-- what recommendations do participants have following the initial seven days of training?

This research study collected data pertaining to the opinions of those interviewed about concerns about the Cognitive Coaching initiative in the Johnston district and recommendations.

Two of the main concerns were staying power over time and follow-up to the seven-days of training. Edwards and Newton found that a group trained "earlier was higher on all measures may indicate that the impact of Cognitive Coaching is not immediate, but that its effects manifest themselves over time as teachers utilize their training and

participate in multiple cycles of coaching" (Edwards & Newton, 1995, p. 24). Similarly, McLymont and da Costa, (1998) support this finding about the need for teachers to revisit what they learn.

Summary

The literature reviewed finds benefit in participation in and implementation of the skills taught in the Cognitive Coaching training. There are a variety of ways in which Cognitive Coaching may be implemented to benefit teachers, administrators, district environment and students.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

A case study approach was used and interviews were conducted to gather data about the impact of Cognitive Coaching on participants and on the Johnston Community School District. Since an Area Education Agency employs the researcher, there was little or no cost to this study, for researching the impact of training is part of the job description. However, the support of the supervisor and the agency was needed and acquired.

The Johnston Community School District was selected as the case study because it is a school district where the training has been and is continuing to be conducted. They have incorporated Cognitive Coaching into various aspects of the district culture including the evaluation model, mentor/mentee program, and in team efforts. Their training program has included central office staff, administrators, and classroom teachers as participants. The variety of participants made it possible for the study to address the impact on educators serving in various roles. It was important for the role of researcher to be clear and for the presence to be accepted by the key players, including administrators, teachers, and support staff. To facilitate this, the researcher worked with the "gatekeepers" to gain the acceptance needed to conduct the study. The Director of Human Services was and is very supportive of the study and

wrote a cover letter to encourage staff participation. In addition, the support of the Cognitive Coaching lead trainer, principals, and central office administration was secured.

Sample Selection

A stratified sample was selected to be sure that representatives from a cross-section of educator roles, such as teachers, support staff, and administrators were included. The rationale behind purposeful sample selection was researched. As stated by Burgess in Merriam (1998, p. 76), the researcher needs "to consider where to observe, when to observe, whom to observe and what to observe. In short, sampling in field research involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events." In addition, Honigmann also states in Merriam (1998, p. 84),"Non-probability sampling methods are logical as long as the field-worker expects mainly to use his data not to answer questions like 'how much' and 'how often' but to solve qualitative problems, such as discovering what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences." Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned (Patton, 1990, p. 61). Patton argues that "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study

in depth" (Patton, 1990, p. 61).

A list of the staff who have participated in Cognitive Coaching was reviewed. The list included other information such as: number of times they have been trained in Cognitive Coaching, special building roles, number of years in education and in the district, grade level and/or content taught, participation in mentor/mentee program, level of education reached, age, sex, and other factors the district might be interested in studying. Included in the list of the 56 Cognitive Coaching participants from the Johnston schools were 11 administrators/evaluators, 4 mentor facilitators, 27 mentor/mentee program participants, 4 future trainers, and 10 others. In determining how many interviews would be conducted, the researcher considered the amount of time that each interview would take, the imposition on staff by taking their time to participate in the reflective conversations, the size of the whole group, and the number of interviewees that would be needed to cover the story of Cognitive Coaching in the district. In addition, what is an adequate number of participants, sites or activities to answer the question posed at the beginning of the study (in the form of the purpose statement) was researched. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend sampling until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached (Lincoln & Guba, p. 64). The size of the sample within the case is determined by a number of factors relevant to the study's purpose (p. 66).

The researcher concluded that about 20 staff members would need to be interviewed to begin to see similar threads of perceptions and ideas. Some room to add another person in each of the groups was provided should there appear to be a need during the interview process to hear from more people. Therefore, a ratio of 20 to 56 was used, which figured out to be 3 administrators, 2 mentor facilitators, and 2 future trainers, 9 mentor/ mentee program participants, and 3 others. 1 additional mentor facilitator and 1 future trainer were added to be sure that there was a wider scope of viewpoints. In addition, the Program Director was included because it was vital to include his perspective in the study. He was informed that his input would have a limited amount of confidentiality, although the researcher tried to imbed his comments in the administrative group summary.

The names of the individuals in each group were printed on pieces of paper and randomly selected. The names were recorded in order in case there should be people who chose not to participate. Then, the next name on the list was selected for each group. 22 names were placed in a File Maker Pro database. During this step in the process, it was apparent that there was not have any representation from Beaver Creek Elementary. The next administrator on the list was selected and the next mentor program participant on the list from Beaver Creek was selected for a total of 24 interviewees.

Cover letter and survey forms were prepared for the potential participants to fill out indicating their willingness to participate in the study. The letter assured them that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would be kept confidential. They were also assured that they could remove themselves from the study at any time and that the results would be summarized as a group. The survey asked for information about their participation in various follow-up activities, participation in the mentor/mentee program, level of evaluation, and number of times and when trained in Cognitive Coaching, how they have seen Cognitive Coaching implemented in the district, and how they are implementing their skills. These documents accompanied the letter from the Program Director. Of the 24 letters sent, one negative response was received. Eight did not respond. A follow-up e-mail was sent, and all but four responded. Therefore, there were 19 participants to interview for the study.

Instrumentation

The process used to collect the data about effects resulting from participation in Cognitive Coaching was to conduct semi-structured interviews, with the participants (mentioned above) interviewed individually. A loose interpretation of the reflective conference map of Cognitive Coaching was used to conduct the interviews, since the respondents were familiar with the style of

questioning. The interviews were taped because it is not appropriate to take notes during a coaching conference. Eye contact and being in rapport with the person being coached, or in this case, interviewed, is crucial for trust building and comfort. Because of the flexibility of the reflective conference map, it was not possible to predict all the questions that would be used in the interview.

Thus the interviewer-respondent interaction is a complex phenomenon. Both parties bring biases, predispositions, attitudes, and physical characteristics that color the interaction and the data solicited. A skilled interviewer accounts for these factors in order to evaluate the data being obtained (Merriam, 1998, p. 87).

However, several of the following questions were included:

1. What impact has your participation in Cognitive Coaching had on you in your personal life?
2. What impact has Cognitive Coaching had on you professionally?
3. How has your use of coaching affected your work with colleagues, parents, and students?
4. How would someone who knew you prior to your participation in the training compare your communication skills then and now?
5. What evidence do you see of Cognitive Coaching being implemented in your team, staff meetings, building, and district?

6. When you need to be coached, to whom do you go?
7. If you were the superintendent, what goals would you have for Cognitive Coaching over the next five years?
8. What impact has this training had on your classroom? Work environment?
9. What opportunities have you had to practice your coaching skills?
10. As you reflect on your use of the coaching skills, what additional support and follow-up to the training would be helpful?
11. What do you need to continue to be involved in Cognitive Coaching?
12. How is your work different since your participation?
13. What is needed in the district to keep the Cognitive Coaching fires burning?
14. How has this reflective interview assisted you in your thinking about coaching?

The benefit of using the interview process to collect data is that there was the freedom to ask other questions as the interviews proceeded. As a skilled coach, the role of the researcher was to ask questions that mediated each person being interviewed to a higher state of consciousness about their application of cognitive coaching skills. Following each interview, a considerable amount of time was taken to reflect on the conversation and an interview

summary was written. It is from these summaries that the threads and trends were formed. In addition, use of the interview is supported by research that states "The main purpose of an interview is to obtain a special kind of information." As Merriam (1998) quotes Patton, the researcher wants to find out what is "in and on someone else's mind" (p. 71). Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them (p. 72).

Research Methods

To analyze the data, an interpretational analysis was employed including taping the conversations for accuracy and transcribing notes following the interviews, coding the responses, compiling the data from the interviews into an EXCEL spreadsheet with careful choices of category organization. All the interviews were reviewed and categories that summarized the data were developed.

In an effort to draw conclusions from the interview data collected, trends or themes were identified as the data was studied. The data was recorded in tables as various modes of implementation, skills used, concerns, and recommendations were mentioned. In summarizing and conveying the results of this study, analytic reporting was used. An objective writing style, and the format of introduction, literature review, methodology, results, and discussion were followed. Tables and figures were included

whenever possible to visually present the study results. Following the completion of this thesis, the results and recommendations will be offered to Heartland AEA 11's Professional Development Team and to the Johnston district.

There are some concerns about the validity of this study that needed to be addressed. Participants in Cognitive Coaching are usually skilled in communication and are chosen to attend the training for that reason. In addition, participants might have believed that it is to their benefit to answer that Cognitive Coaching has had a positive impact on their behaviors to prove to the administration that they were a good choice to participate. Anonymity was necessary to avoid some of these problems.

Timeline

11/1	12/1	2/15	Before 4/1	5/1	5/15
Select sample and send letter; Prepare survey	Begin inter-views	Complete interviews; Collect data	Analyze data; Complete thesis	Meet with Johnston Cognitive Coaching Program Director to report preliminary findings	Report to Johnston Admin. Team

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND FINDINGS

In this chapter, the data collected in the study are presented and analyzed. The first question to address is what is important or significant enough from the interview to report and discuss? The criteria used to answer that question included the frequency of the times the same comment was made during the interviews and the relevance to current literature on cognitive coaching. All topics or issued will be accounted for in the descriptive narrative and/or accompanying charts and tables. However, the findings of those interest areas or topics that were mentioned more often will be addressed in more detail. It is possible that if additional interviews were to be conducted, the less frequently mentioned topics might have received increased attention.

The information collected during the interviews relevant to this study fell into four categories: skills mentioned, implementation vehicles mentioned, concerns and recommendations. The findings will be presented in these four areas.

Findings

While conducting the reflective interviews, the four guiding research questions were considered as data was collected to determine the value of participation in

Cognitive Coaching training for a participant and for the Johnston district.

1. What skills are participants using from the training; what skills do they perceive others in the district to be using?
2. How is Cognitive Coaching being implemented as part of the Johnston Community School District's culture?
3. In what ways is training having a positive impact on students in the district?
4. What concerns do participants have following the initial seven days of training?
5. What recommendations do participants have following the initial seven days of training?

To begin to sort the data, the notes transcribed from each of the 19 interviews with Johnston staff were reviewed. The notes were sorted according to skills mentioned, implementation vehicles cited, concerns, and recommendations. These four areas addressed the guiding research questions and were the four major topics mentioned in the interviews. In the Recommendations section, other important information gleaned from the interviews will be included.

Research Question 1: What skills are participants using from the training; what skills do they perceive others in the district to be using?

During the course of the 19 interviews conducted with

Johnston staff, several skills taught during the seven days of Cognitive Coaching were mentioned. The skill mentioned most frequently during the interviews was listening. Seventy-three percent of those interviewed made mention of their improved listening skills. More specifically, the listening set-asides, increased awareness about the kinds of things said, being less directive in work with colleagues and students and allowing them to find their own solution to a problem were cited as examples. In describing the personal impact of having participated in the training, one participant said that she was more conscious of what she said, how she said it and the impact that she has on individuals or groups in all the interactions she has. She now considers each as an opportunity to assist others. Another participant said that he is using Cognitive Coaching with adults in his building. When a teacher comes to him with a concern about a student, he helps them formulate ideas to help the child. He has realized that his solution won't create ownership in the adult.

Evidence of listening skills, as demonstrated by the administrative team was mentioned, and the help that Cognitive Coaching offers to assist mentors in work with mentees was also cited. One person interviewed said that the skills help with talking to others at all times--time to think, listening skills, and body language. Another interviewee said that she realized that Cognitive Coaching is the exact same type of listening and reflecting as her

guidance and counseling background.

Problem solving and questioning skills were mentioned by over 50% of those interviewed. One administrator interviewed said,

> Training in reflective questioning and collecting data for one another is important--breaks down isolationism. Change is difficult, no matter what the issue--people and the organizational culture tend to go back to how you were before. Security in working with others; having the opportunity to delve deeper, using problem-solving model--opportunities for dialogue help us to overcome the issues that keep us out of our comfort zone. Cognitive Coaching helps us to expand that zone. We try new things, take the risk and it is OK if it doesn't work.

A teacher said that the coaching skills have helped him to be able to enter into a positive conversation in a non-threatening way to clear up communication. It is an avenue of approach that is more open to problem solving. Venting is replaced by problem solving as colleagues work towards a common goal.

Another skill taught in the Cognitive Coaching training that was mentioned frequently was paraphrasing. Forty-seven percent of those interviewed mentioned this skill. Other skills mentioned include planning conference map, reflective conference map, and group coaching, and building trust. An interviewee mentioned that group coaching has

been used with committees to recognize group dynamics and to see where people are with states of mind.

To encourage and demonstrate understanding of the five states of mind a building administrator held a flexibility party. She talked about it as a state of mind and tried to show that the Cognitive Coaching skills are coming more and more to the forefront. They know she believes in it and wants others trained in the building. Another participant sees Cognitive Coaching through lenses of the five states of mind. A metacoach helped her to be aware of how she was addressing a challenge by asking her which state of mind she was focusing on. As a coach, she asks open-ended and probing questions to push those she is coaching into considering other perspectives to raise the their state of mind. She added that her challenge is to stop and think which one is the issue to help her to focus on the right questions. For another participant, this process works with self-talk as he asks himself what is most important to me? Journaling helps him to find the answer. A building principal tries to be intentional in his use of the term to describe craftsmanship when excellent teaching is seen; he shares terms to enlighten and encourage interest in training.

Several interviews addressed the development of personal communication skills as a result of participation in Cognitive Coaching. One participant referred to the skills as, "a critical foundation piece for all we want to do:

adopt a new reading series, ask reflective questions to help others understand, thematic instruction, block scheduling or any other new program. Training in reflective questioning and collecting data for one another is important--break down isolationism."

Some interviewed consider the coaching skills as an umbrella over all communication skills rather than using a map consciously.

> It is part of the umbrella for me that has made me a better communicator. I am not a bandwagon person. I didn't fall for it hook, line and sinker, but I have an open mind about it and have tried to apply it to my interests and abilities. It does come out in leadership styles, how decisions are made. It's there. It's not overt. It is an umbrella for the district too.

Many expressed appreciation about having the opportunity to delve deeper, using the problem-solving model, having opportunities for dialogue to help us to "Overcome the issues that keep us out of our comfort zone. Cognitive Coaching helps us to expand that zone. We try new things, take the risk and it is OK if it doesn't work." Cognitive Coaching, as another interviewee pointed out, helps us to be reflective about our teaching. It provides a comfortable way to talk about hard things. Another participant said that Cognitive Coaching makes the system more productive by making the organization more productive in what we do,

which is to teach kids. He has seen examples where this is true.

On occasion, an interview would include a comment about a skill in both a positive and negative light. For example, several participants mentioned paraphrasing and the need for it to be done skillfully. While most considered paraphrasing an important skill, it might come off as "corny" or "awkward". One interviewee said that paraphrasing could get you into trouble. Your own filters may make your paraphrase unclear. Another stressed the need to be careful when you paraphrase and not to be sarcastic because you can break trust if you are.

Table 1 shows those Cognitive Coaching skills mentioned during the interviews. It is worthwhile to notice that some skills are mentioned as a positive (1) and negative (-1) simultaneously as in Interview # one--paraphrasing. The Totals indicate the number of times that a skill was mentioned including positives and negative comments.

Table 1

Skills Mentioned During the Interviews by Each Study Participant

Interview #	*Planning Map*	*Reflective Map*	*Problem Solving Map*	*Rapport*	*Trust*	*Listening*	*Group Coaching*	*Non-Verbals*	*Para-phrasing*	*Questioning*	*5 States of Mind*
one	1	1	1			1	1		1/-1	1	
two						1			1/-1	1	1
three						1	1			1	
four	1	1	1								1
five					1	1	1			1	1
six						1	-1				
seven						1					
eight	1	1	1			1					
nine	1		1						1		
ten			1	1	1	1		1		1	
eleven					-1						1
twelve		1				1			1		
thirteen	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
fourteen			1			1	1			1/-1	
fifteen	1				1	1	1	1	1	1	
sixteen	1		1			1	1	1	1	1	1
seventeen			1					1	1	1	
eighteen			1	1	1	1			1/-1		
nineteen	1	1	1		-1				1	1	1
Total	**8**	**6**	**11**	**3**	**7**	**14**	**8**	**4**	**9**	**11**	**7**

Figure 1 shows the relative number of times each skill was mentioned during the interviews.

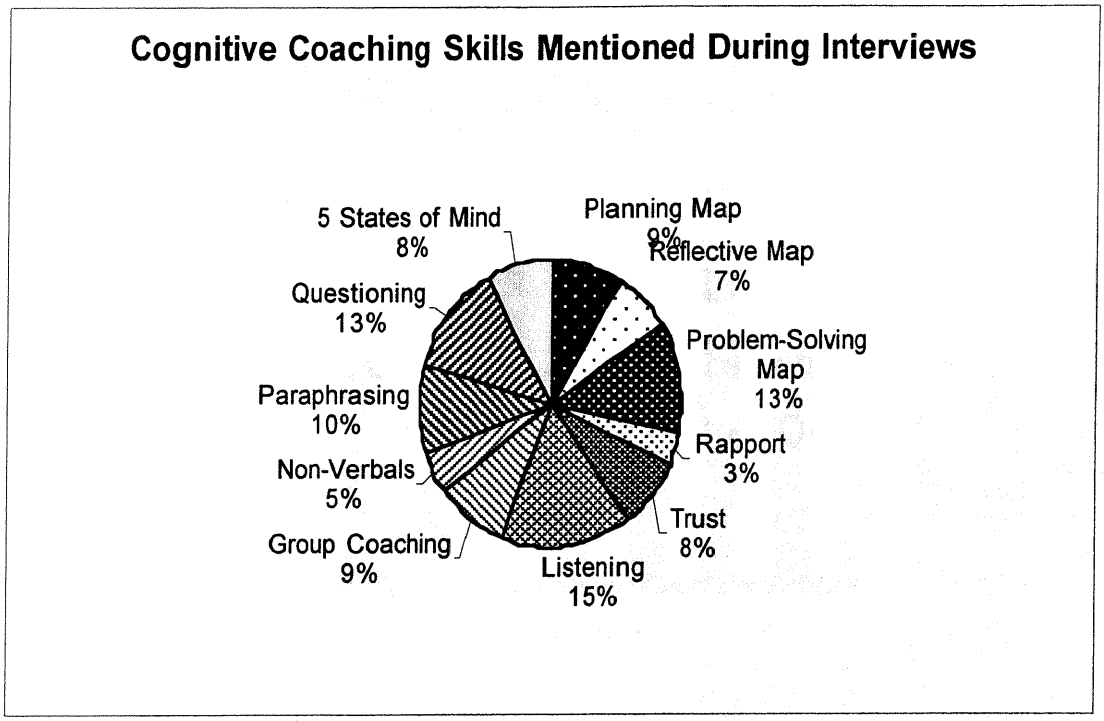


Figure 1. Cognitive coaching skills mentioned during interviews.

Figure 2 provides a comparative visual of the skills mentioned. Listening skills was mentioned more often than any other skill.

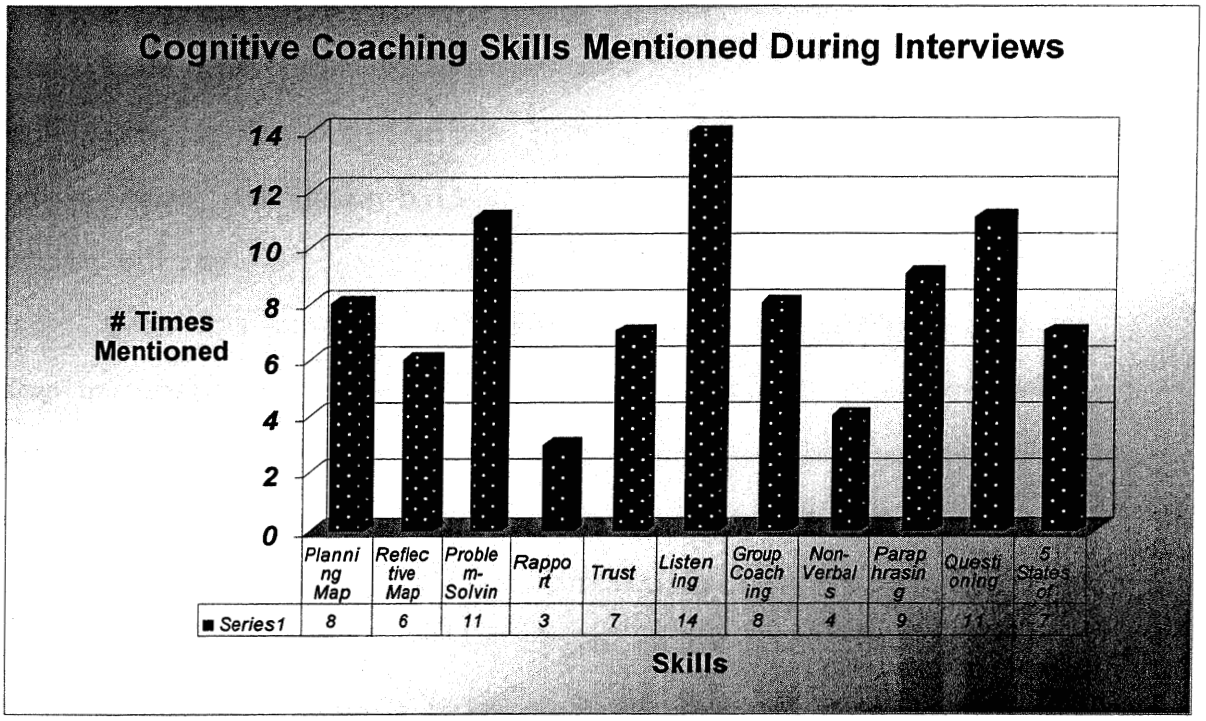


Figure 2. Cognitive coaching skills mentioned during interviews.

Research Question 2: "How is Cognitive Coaching being implemented as part of the Johnston Community School District's culture?"

During the interviews, the participants were asked to discuss where they see evidence of the implementation of Cognitive Coaching. They were asked to address this question on three different levels: their personal experience, in their building and in the district as a whole entity.

Over 63% of the staff interviewed saw evidence of implementation in their own lives and in the mentor/mentee program offered for new teachers. One person interviewed said that she was more conscious of imposing her own ideas and being judgmental in her personal and professional life. She struggles with this but tries to be more of a coach than an expert. She is working with a first year teacher and listens a lot. She gives him more information than she would as a coach. Knowing when to wear the coaching hat and when to give advice is still being something she is working to figure out. A counselor seeks out his former mentor years after he was in the role of new teacher. They continue to have an implied coaching relationship that is reciprocal. He hears from new teachers that the mentor/mentee program is helping to decrease the feeling of being lost. Another said that the mentoring program was a great learning tool. The coaching process was used including a pre-conference, observation, and a post-

conference. Specific data was collected at the request of the new teacher. Immediate feedback was helpful.

Over 50% of the staff interviewed saw evidence in the evaluation model used in the district. One administrator said that response to the new evaluation method is comfortable for first year teachers because the mentoring program prepares them with some of the basics of Cognitive Coaching. For others, including veterans and mentors, they don't come ready for the planning conference. They still want reassurance and positive validation. It is hard for them to be in the driver's seat. They tend to be self-critical but are often on target with how she would do a traditional evaluation. She believes that evaluations with trained staff are different. It is scarier for her because they know the skills, but they still want affirmation. She said that the evaluator/evaluatee role still brings issues out. This is how it has always been; the shift hasn't taken place yet. It is still an evolving process. Although she appreciates the opportunity to share her opinions and reflections during her own evaluation, she too still wants affirmation in one sentence "You are doing OK." Another administrator uses the coaching maps verbatim. He has a card laminated with prompts and uses them a lot!"

Forty-seven percent of the interviews included comments about seeing evidence of Cognitive Coaching in parent teacher communication and in work with students. One teacher said that parents get a better feel for what their

goals are for their kids. They express their views up front and are more willing to enter into a problem-solving process. He listens first. A primary teacher said that she is usually the first one to tell parents that their child is having problems. She now lets them feel and spill emotions and then can refocus with good questions to problem solving. They are thankful. She feels that it is easier to focus on the problem using eye contact and rapport. She is less directive and listens more. At parent conferences, the parents start first now with numerous participants interviewed. On teacher said, "Cognitive Coaching did this. Conferences are more open now. Parents are caught off guard because they can express concerns or positives. This opens dialogue both ways."

Thirty-seven percent of those interviewed felt that the Cognitive Coaching skills validated their prior knowledge in guidance and counseling. Thirty-one percent saw evidence of the skills implemented through the group coaching process at staff and team meetings. In one school, an administrator said that some staff are dedicated and conscious. Evidence shows in questions at meetings, grade level teams, and one on one. Another teacher said that district leaders talk with the people rather than at them. They are partners, which is more inviting.

Research Question 3: "In what ways is training having a positive impact on students in the district?"

During the interviews, participants specifically

mentioned use of the Cognitive Coaching skills with students. One said that clarifying and paraphrasing, tone of voice, and restatement helps. Another said that he didn't think there would be a direct link to students at first, but now sees the benefit. A counselor said that she sees the benefits when she is one on one with kids, large and small kids.

A middle school teacher said that Cognitive Coaching skills help her to coach students to think about things in a different way and to come up with their own solutions. She can guide them better. She may have an idea of where she wants them to go and they may come up with a new path. It is a different mind-set, not manipulation, even when she has an agenda. Additional implementation with students includes conflict resolution and problem solving. A teacher said that he removes himself so they can come up with the solutions as opposed to being a boss or manager. He is more of a mediator with his fifth graders and let's students solve their own problems as he serves as guide.

A secondary teacher said that she uses it with students but that there is not enough time because of the entire curriculum to be covered. "It helps with students who are struggling with an issue because they get an opportunity to come up with their own idea of what will work with them. Kids come to me with concerns instead of walking away frustrated. I'm a better listener and more patient." Participation in Cognitive Coaching has opened

her eyes to differences. Another teacher thinks of Cognitive Coaching as a problem-solving mechanism. "There is so much we need to question during the day to help students to question and to understand what they are learning." This teacher uses the conference maps when there is a low level of consciousness. "Flexibility is an issue. Students can't see another perspective to honor or respect." Other teachers use the skills with students to address discipline issues, in teaching students to use good questioning skills by encouraging them to develop questions that are thought provoking. One teacher encourages her students to get more than from yes/no questions as they learn to probe for specificity.

Table 2 shows the most frequently mentioned vehicles for implementation in the district. Others mentioned include negotiations, curriculum development, dialogue about reducing class sizes, professional dialogue in the teacher's lounge.

Table 2

Ways in Which Cognitive Coaching Is Being Implemented

Interview #	Mentor/ Mentee	Eval.	BIT	DIT	BAT	IEP	Group Coach.	Reading Series/ Curr.	Self-Talk	Reflect Climate	Stand. Bench/ Assess.	Validate Counseling	Personal Life	Parent Conf.	Students
one	1		1										1		1
two	1								1			1		1	
three		1					1					1	1	1	
four	1	1													
five	1	1					1		1				1	1	1
six	1						1						1	1	1
seven		1										1			
eight	1				1								1	1	
nine	1											1			
ten			1										1	1	1
eleven		1								1	1	1		1	
twelve		1										1			
thirteen													1	1	1
fourteen	1	1					1						1		1
fifteen	1	1					1					1	1		
sixteen	1		1	1		1	1						1		1
seventeen									1				1	1	1
eighteen	1	1						1					1		1
nineteen	1	1						1	1	1	1				
Total	12	10	3	1	1	1	6	2	4	2	2	7	12	9	9

Figure 3 is a pie chart showing implementation of Cognitive Coaching. This pie chart shows the relative frequency that implementation of Cognitive Coaching was mentioned during interviews. Mentor/mentee training and the use in personal life communication were mentioned most often.

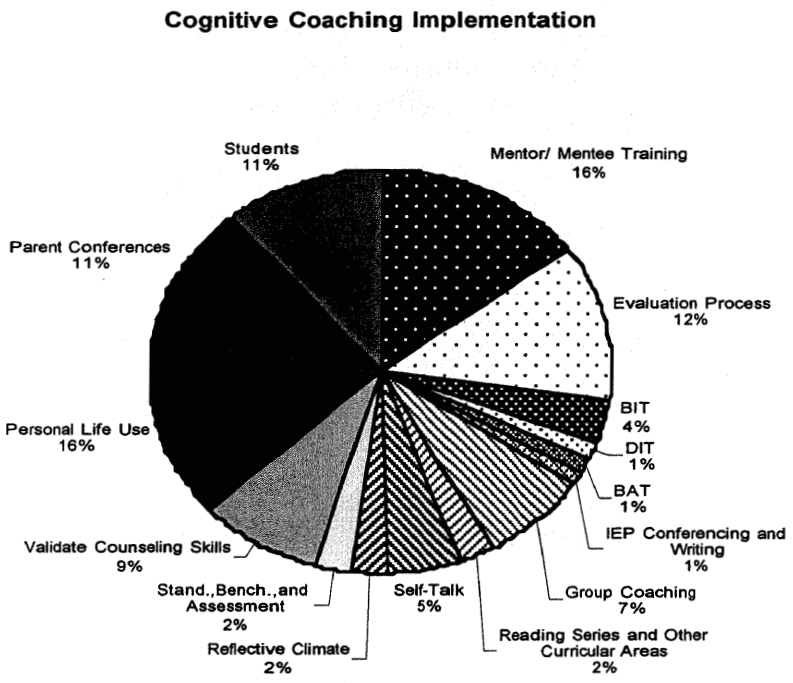
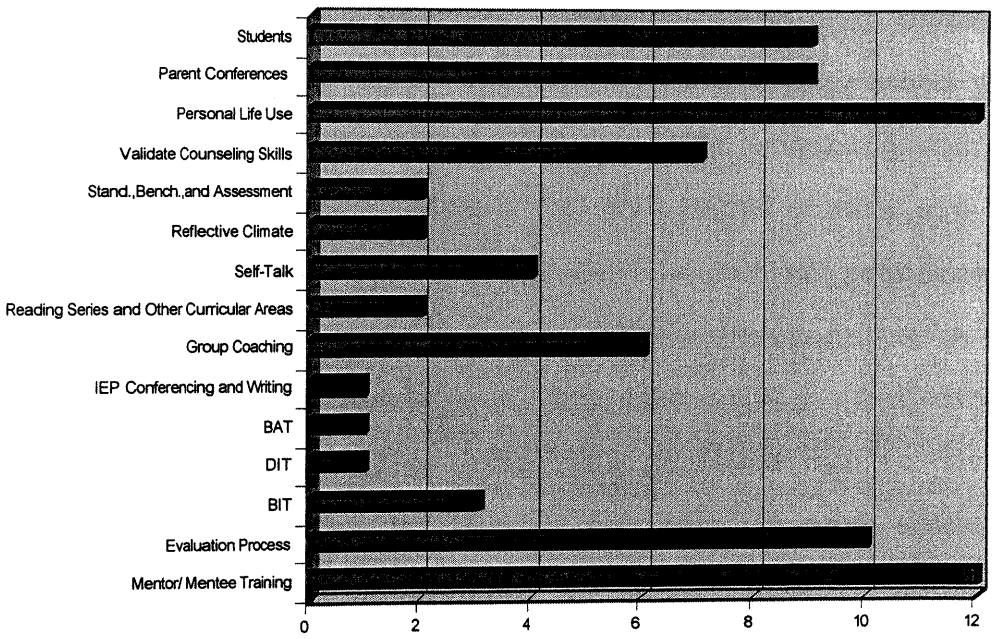


Figure 3. Cognitive Coaching implementation.

The bar graph in Figure 4 shows implementation of Cognitive Coaching. This bar graph shows the relative frequency of implementation mentioned during the interviews.



	Mentor/ Mentee Training	Evaluation Process	BIT	DIT	BAT	IEP Conferencing and	Group Coaching	Reading Series and Other	Self-Talk	Reflective Climate	Stand.,Bench.,and Assess	Validate Counseling Skills	Personal Life Use	Parent Conferences	Students
Series2	12	10	3	1	1	1	6	2	4	2	2	7	12	9	9

Figure 4. Cognitive Coaching implementation.

Research Question 4: "What concerns do participants have following the initial seven days of training?"

Various concerns about the Cognitive Coaching training in the Johnston School District were discussed in the interviews. By far the issue of most concern is the amount of time required by the training and to follow-up to build and maintain skills. Over 50% of those interviewed said that the time factor is huge. A teacher said that common time to coach is hard to come by. A trainer expressed the opinion that some who may be very good at coaching don't want to commit to any thing else. She hopes others are using the training but some are getting out of practice because they don't have the opportunity to practice. A secondary teacher pointed out that there are no building-wide follow-up activities. They are on their own to have it become ingrained. Due to limited mobility in each school, time to meet during the school day to practice is needed.

The second biggest concern, mentioned by over 30% of the participants, was the need for more coaches on the same team or in the same department to make coaching more accessible and readily available. One participant said that in buildings it is easy to forget training, and that results in a struggle for building wide implementation. Proximity to a coach is important. He suggested that it would be easier if the schedule of classes allowed time to meet during a common coaching/planning time. A building mentor facilitator said that most negative comments about

the mentor/mentee program are from those who don't have mentors that are readily available in the same department where it is easier to meet for coaching sessions. Another interviewee said that it would lead to more cohesiveness in teams if Cognitive Coaching was more of a part of the middle school culture. Those who are frustrated about their teams might benefit with better communication. Group coaching needs to be used more in team meetings; it is used on occasion in her team.

Other concerns mentioned were: need for more awareness and involvement, inconsistent support from the principals, and animosity of untrained staff, often related to the use of blackout days for professional leave on the seven days of training, preventing other staff from being involved in alternative activities on those days. One teacher said, "Untrained staff see it as one more thing the district is doing. If not involved, they don't seek out understanding. Staff meetings are informational but there isn't evidence of coaching skills." Another teacher mentioned the difference in trained/non-trained reaction to use of Cognitive Coaching at staff meetings. Some are not familiar and are frustrated. They may feel led and lose trust. Intentional coaching may cause a perception of superiority. A teacher said that it is awareness would help. The staff needs to know and recognize the benefits.

Another concern is that there is some confusion about the evaluation process, Some experience confusion about use

in evaluation and may want more direction. An administrator said that when staff is asked which evaluation format is preferred, the reflective conference was considered more rewarding. However, the people in the district who do evaluations are at different skill levels. Another administrator pointed out that there are different levels of buy-in with staff and administration.

Some expressed concern about the "staying power" of Cognitive Coaching should the leaders of the initiative leave the district. Simultaneously, some participants expressed a desire to know where the district is going with Cognitive Coaching. What is the big picture? One said that she believes it is vital that they know how it fits? She said, "We need to know how important it is and that it is not fluff. Let's go with it!" Another said there is a need to know why this is important. By using it, where will it take us?

Another suggested that the question we need to answer is,

> How does it change our district? How does it improve the quality of what we do? If it doesn't have something clearly visible that people say we are a better place because we did this, then it will stop. . . . Only way it will survive is if somebody says we can't give this up because this is what's happened as a result.

In five years, Cognitive Coaching in Johnston needs clear value. People will need to see it as a part of what they need to have. It will make sense when they can point to something--a better climate, better environment, more

student focus, and the fact that we are better at solving problems than we would be without it. This should not be subtle but very obvious.

Table 3 shows the concerns mentioned most often during the interviews. Others mentioned include varying levels of skill among the administrators, varying levels of buy-in, reaction to change, and lack of trust.

Table 3

Table of Concerns Mentioned Regarding Cognitive Coaching

Interview#	Need for Coaches of Same Ability	Animosity Untrained Staff	Animosity RE: Use of Subs	Inconsis-tent Support	Confusion RE: Eval.	Lack of Support of Superiors	Need Aware-ness	Need Coaches on Team	Lack of Time	Staying Power
one								1	1	
two									1	1
three									1	
four		1	1		1		1		1	
five										
six				1		1	1		1	
seven								1	1	
eight		1						1		
nine				1				1		
ten										
eleven	1								1	
twelve					1			1	1	
thirteen								1		
fourteen										
fifteen		1					1		1	
sixteen			1				1		1	
seventeen										
eighteen										1
nineteen	1		1	1	1	1				1
Total	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	6	10	3

Figure 5 bar graph shows concerns mentioned during interviews. This figure shows the relative frequency of the concerns mentioned regarding Cognitive Coaching training in the Johnson district.

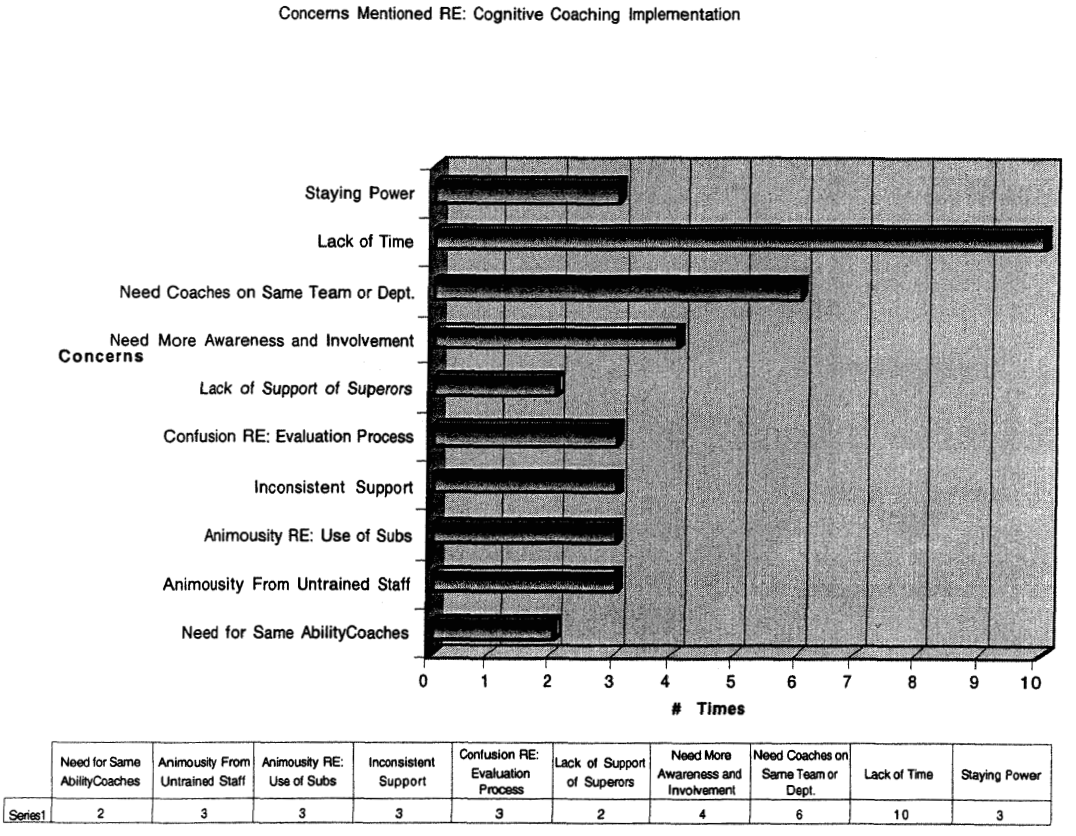


Figure 5. Concerns mentioned during interviews.

Figure 6 is a pie chart of concerns regarding Cognitive Coaching training. This figure provides a visual comparison of the frequency each concern was mentioned during the interviews.

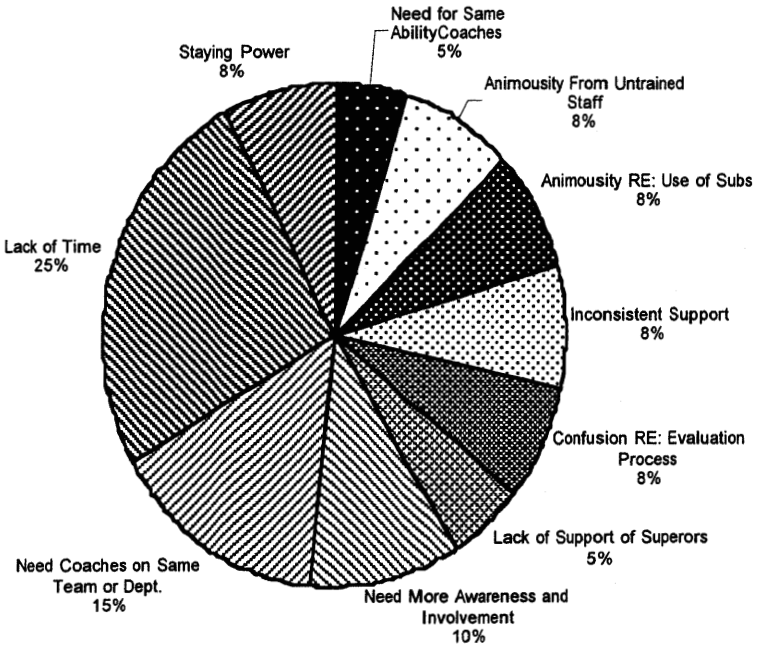


Figure 6. Concerns mentioned re Cognitive Coaching in Johnston schools.

Research Question 5. "What recommendations do participants have following the initial seven days of training?"

During the interviews, participants were asked questions to offer the opportunity to recommend how they would like to see Cognitive Coaching implemented in the district. Questions may have been in the form of, "If you were the superintendent with unlimited resources, how would you view Cognitive Coaching?" The greatest number of answers related to providing more structures practice opportunities on a regular basis, most suggesting the use of inservice time. Over 63% wanted to see time devoted to working on the Cognitive Coaching skills learned in the initial seven days. As one interviewed said, "Purposeful conversations need time and more people trained. It is an intentionality piece."

To become more a part of her, one participant suggested ongoing opportunities periodically to go back over key points of the training and to practice. She would like a three-day follow-up or refresher course, possibly for credit and would use inservice times for practice, review, and use skills, small refreshers as cognitive breaks. She said that it is an intentionality issue. Several interviewed recommended practice for people at different levels in their skills and comfort with Cognitive Coaching. In addition, one teacher suggested that it would be

worthwhile for Cognitive Coaching experiences to be identified when it is used to increase awareness of the skills and concepts.

An administrator suggested including a data coach in practice opportunities to train staff to be data questioners. "Combine data and Cognitive Coaching to help see how kids are doing and then decide strategies to improve. Schedule one less period to teach every day and during that period--coach and conference." Several suggested using a structured approach to implementation with follow-up with built in opportunities to practice. As one person interviewed said, "You need to use it or lose it."

Other recommendations that were frequently mentioned addressed training more staff and using the group coaching skills at staff meetings. Others included being more intentional about connecting Cognitive Coaching to lessons, standards and benchmarks, functional results, and common curricular issues with more building level integration. Support needed to level the playing field. Train all staff so all can use the same skills to avoid a "have and have not" culture. Train students. Train all, including bus drivers and support staff, not just teachers. All make a difference with kids.

Identifying trained staff to make it easier to know who to go to for coaching support was another recommendation. Several expressed a need to know who has had it. They need

to know faces, not names, so they'd know who to go to for a planning conversation because it is hard to recall who has had it.

Other suggestions were to offer prompt sheets, to expand curricular implementation, and to allow staff the opportunity to take the seven days of training again. One administrator carries a miniature "states of mind and word bank" in her planner and willingly shares with others. She believes that it is good to be reminded what it looks like and sounds like when she is efficacious. Others recommended looking at different ways to train with more in-house trainers so the district won't have to pay an outside trainer and other scheduling ideas that are more creative.

Based on his belief that time is the greatest resource, one administrator would build a study team to observe and give feedback on teaching and learning in the classroom. The team could read something and process it together. In addition, they could schedule a time to come in to give feedback. In this plan, Cognitive Coaching would be more integrated in what is going on in the classroom and involved with doing a better job with kids.

Table 4 includes the recommendations mentioned most frequently during the interviews. Others mentioned include increase number of in-house trainers to reduce costs, include parents, students, and community in training.

Table 4.

Recommendations Regarding Cognitive Coaching

Interview #	Struct. Practice	Read-ing	Inser-vice	Identify Staff Trained	Provide Refresh.	Train More Staff	Train Non-Cert.	Inc. Aware	Prompt Sheets	Repeat 7 Days	Expand Curr. Use	Reinforce Progress	Use at Staff Meetings
one	1		1								1		1
two	1	1									1	1	
three	1												
four						1		1					1
five	1	1	1					1					
six	1		1			1		1					
seven	1												1
eight	1			1	1								1
nine										1			
ten	1												
eleven	1			1	1	1	1	1	1				1
twelve	1								1				
thirteen						1				1			1
fourteen	1		1			1				1			
fifteen	1				1			1		1			
sixteen			1	1		1		1	1	1			1
seventeen							1						
eighteen										1	1	1	
nineteen						1					1	1	
Total	12	2	5	3	3	7	2	6	3	6	4	3	7

Figure 7 is a pie chart showing recommendations made regarding Cognitive Coaching in the Johnston district. The figure shows the relative frequency of the recommendations made regarding Cognitive Coaching. The most frequently mentioned recommendation refers to increasing structured practice opportunities.

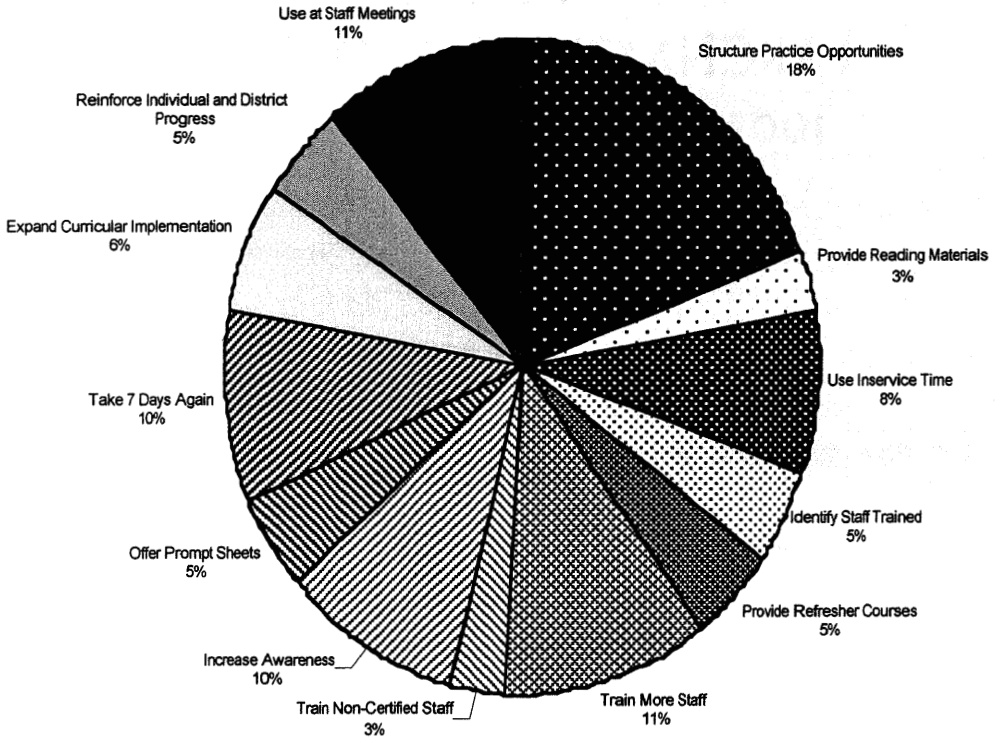


Figure 7. Recommendations regarding Cognitive Coaching in Johnston schools.

Figure 8 is a bar graph showing the relative frequency of the recommendations made during interviews.

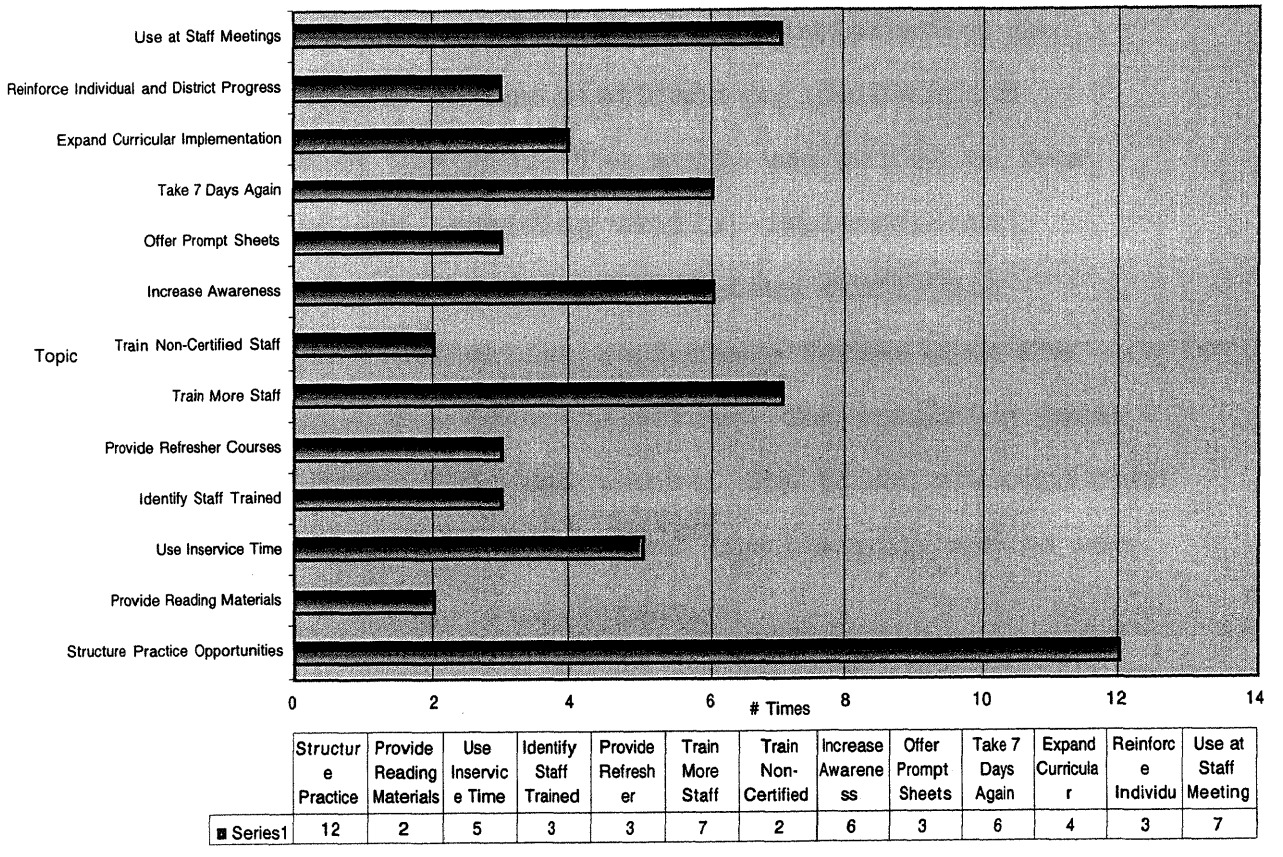


Figure 8. Bar graph showing recommendations regarding cognitive coaching in the Johnston School District.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

This study explored the impact of participation in Cognitive Coaching on the staff and on the Johnston Community School District. The study was guided by four research questions regarding skills, implementation, concerns, and recommendations. Nineteen staff were interviewed in a reflective conference format with the interviews taped for data collection. The resulting data was reviewed for trends and themes. The study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the training and to see if there was a significant impact.

Summary of Findings

"What skills are participants using from the training; what skills do they perceive others in the district to be using?"

Almost all participants interviewed were positive about the improvements in their listening skills and in their ability to be less directive in dialogue with colleagues, parents, students, and significant people in their personal lives. They consider their increased ability to engage in problem solving and to use quality questioning to be helpful in their professional and personal lives.

"How is Cognitive Coaching being implemented as part of the Johnston Community School District's culture?"

Those who mentioned it in their interviews saw the mentor/mentee program in a positive light. The coaching skills are seen as a valuable tool to help new teachers to problem-solve without being directed by their mentors. Another area of implementation frequently mentioned as positive is in the use of the skills in personal life situations. In work with parents, particularly in conferencing, those interviewed felt that letting the parents guide the dialogue was a more effective way to go. In using Cognitive Coaching with students, teachers found that students were more willing to problem-solve and come up with new ways of thinking if they used the maps and questioning skills.

"Ultimately, in what ways is training having a positive impact on students in the district?"

Many staff interviewed are seeing benefits in using Cognitive Coaching skills with students as they encourage more problem-solving and creative thinking in their students in curricular areas and in conflict resolution.

"What concerns do participants have following the initial seven days of training?"

The time needed for Cognitive Coaching training and

practice was the biggest issue with the staff interviewed. In addition, the use of substitute teachers is a problem, particularly with non-trained staff. Another issue is the need for easy access to

coaches on the same team or in the same department is needed since there is so little time during the school day to practice. Knowing who has been trained and having easy access to trained co-workers is a need expressed frequently during the interviews. In addition, involving other staff on a broad level, even with awareness of the coaching skills and terminology, was often requested.

The evaluation model and integration of the Cognitive Coaching skills is seen as a more effective way for teachers to decide what data should be collected by the evaluator, so they are in the driver's seat. However, there is some reluctance to give up the more traditional, "tell me how I am doing" model. Clearing up confusion with the evaluation process so teachers are more comfortable taking the lead will take time, but staff believes that this is needed. Finally, while there is some concern about the staying power of Cognitive Coaching, there is also a desire on the part of numerous staff to see the big picture to understand how Cognitive Coaching fits with the district long-term goals.

"What recommendations do participants have following the initial seven days of training?"

Structured practice opportunities was the most frequently mentioned recommendation, as there is a strong desire to maintain and build coaching skill levels. Many would like to see inservice time or time during the workday allotted to Cognitive Coaching. Offering a refresher course, possibly for credit, is also recommended to provide an opportunity for staff to keep the skills "in the front" and to continue their learning. Most would like to see all or more staff trained so there is easier access to trained coaches, possibly to include non-certified staff. In addition, many suggested a wider implementation of group coaching tools to reinforce the learnings and build awareness among all staff.

Discussion

The results of this study are similar to those found in the literature about Cognitive Coaching. As written by Lipton (1993), administrators used the cognitive coaching maps and tools in their reflection and there was an awareness of the five states of mind. There was admission of the need for more work in certain skill areas and reports of positive results from the use of certain maps and tools. The author reports that the data indicates that the participants consciously employed elements of the cognitive coaching training and that the cognitive coaching

skills provided a framework for their reflection. They had more choices in their communication toolbox and were more purposeful in their reactions to situations and how they selected a solution. These findings correspond to the findings in this study related to the benefits of the skills learned and the need for additional support in certain areas.

Similarly, Edwards and Newton cite Garmston's (1991) opinion that Cognitive Coaching has an impact on teacher thinking processes that ultimately result in changes in teaching methods and improved student learning. Edwards and Newton reviewed a study of 40 teachers who had participated in peer coaching (Garmston, 1990). They content-analyzed the material and determined that "those who took Cognitive Coaching express more positive feelings about all aspects of their experience as teachers than those who did not take Cognitive Coaching" (Edwards & Newton, 1995, p. 22). This is corroborated by the findings of this study indicating that those interviewed see the benefits of participating in Cognitive Coaching training in their personal and professional lives, and specifically in their communication with students.

In reference to a mentoring program, Barnett (1995) suggests using the five states of mind as a tool. A mentor may observe, question, and coach the protégé in an effort to determine the states of mind levels throughout their relationship. When the coach perceives that the protégé is

exhibiting a low state of mind during a coaching session, the coach may use his/her skills to mediate the coachee towards increased self-awareness and intensified intentionality about the choice of action. This is the communication process described by numerous interviewees as they discussed the mentor/mentee program in Johnston.

In conference about skills and implementation, the findings of this study indicate that there is a more reflective environment in the district as a result of Cognitive Coaching. Staff is more willing to listen, probe, problem-solve, and use quality questioning. In the literature, Barnett addresses the recent attention that has been directed to the necessity of educational practitioners becoming more reflective about their work. Because reflection is considered to be a cognitive skill, we might expect that with concentrated practice and feedback individuals could improve their reflective capacities (Barnett, 1995, pp. 48, 50). In addition, the coach mediates the coachee towards increased awareness of the reasons for his/her actions (Barnett, 1995; Langer & Colton, 1994; Tye & Costa, 1986). This supports the prevalent suggestion from the interviewees that intentional application of the skills is necessary for the Cognitive Coaching skills to be a part of the Johnston culture.

Finally, this study found that there is a prevalent need for additional follow-up to the seven days of training. The recommendations include a refresher course, possibly for

credit; structured practice at staff meetings and during inservice; better proximity and schedules to facilitate coaching opportunities; and implementation of group coaching in staff and team meeting. This is supported by Showers and Joyce (1996) in their findings that initial training is only the beginning and must be supported by coaching to "result in a greater level of implementation than training alone (Uzat, 1998, p. 9). "Coaching helped nearly all the teachers implement new teaching strategies. Equally important, teachers introduced to the new models could coach one another, provided that the teachers continued to receive follow-up in training settings" (Showers & Joyce, 1996, p. 14).

Conclusions

From the data collected and reported in this study, based on the findings the following conclusions may be reached:

- Cognitive Coaching has a positive impact on the listening skills and the ability to be less directive in personal and professional dialogue.
- Follow-up to the seven days of training through structured practice opportunities in various formats is needed to support the training.
- Participants in the seven days of training have increased ability to engage in problem solving and to use quality questioning in their professional and personal lives.

- The coaching skills taught in the mentor/mentee program help new teachers to problem-solve.
- Using Cognitive Coaching skills with students has led to improved problem-solving and creative thinking.
- Teachers consider the use of Cognitive Coaching, as part of the district evaluation model is an effective way for them to be in the driver's seat.

It was expected that those staff who participated in the training would find it beneficial personally and professionally because training encourages participants to address communication in a whole new way that works with colleagues, parents, and students. However, the training is time consuming and it is vital to practice on a continuous basis for the skills to become part of "who you are." Therefore, for the most part, the findings were not surprising. Educators are facing numerous challenges each day that make it increasingly difficult to find time for reflection unless the opportunities are built into the workday. With increasing demands, follow-up becomes even more necessary for training to become practice.

Another reason why most of the findings were not surprising was the fact that all of the staff interviewed had been through the training. This affected the findings in that it implies that they had been interested enough in communication skills to want to participate in the seven days. Their mutual opinion that the training was beneficial was also not surprising, for many were in district roles

that would present a need for excellent communication skills including: administration, counselors, deans, and mentors.

As part of the reflective conference map for Cognitive Coaching, the final question is always, "How was the coaching conference helpful to you?' This question provided additional data that is noteworthy. Having the opportunity to reflect during our conference had a positive impact on many of the interviewees. Following were the answers received during the interviews:

1. It made me think back to how can we provide evidence to folks that this makes a difference. Program is no stronger than the district's leaders. Don't know if it will survive? Others are strong. Was it worth our investment?
2. I appreciated thinking about new directions--why take it again? Who coaches me and why? My consciousness was raised.
3. We worry about the little things that aren't going well. Some ideas came out to reach out to those who could benefit from honing their skills. Need mindset to be intentional.
4. It was helpful reflecting on part of what I do. How is it valuable and meaningful?
5. This was like a refresher. It helped me to think about what I might say--brought skills forward.
6. It made me think about how far I have gone. I

haven't thought about how I used it. It refreshed my mind, brought Cognitive Coaching to center stage, and helped me think about listening. It was helpful to sort.

7. It was helpful to think how I would handle it if I were in charge and where I think the district should be headed. I have a solution. It makes me a better person and listener. I am more reasonable instead of reacting. I see the benefit. Others would see the benefit if they knew the whole picture.
8. It was an opportunity to think about coaching--take it off the back burner and raise my consciousness of areas I can improve upon. I have a post-conference coming up and will use the skills.
9. Cognitive Coaching came to front of my mind. I reflected on big picture personally and professionally.
10. It was helpful to me because of all the ideas that have been running through my mind. It was a chance to link with someone else to look at a situation through a new lens.
11. This needs to be top down to push to make things happen but both ends are needed.
12. It helps me put pieces together so it isn't fragmented. It helped me clarify where I am with

Cognitive Coaching.

13. The session helped me by raising my awareness of what others would say about me since taking the training. Compared to two years ago, I have changed professionally.
14. It was helpful because I thought about our conference. I recognize how I use it. I haven't opened the book, but I know I can access them. Sees the merit in it and our talk has helped her to see proof of the merit.
15. It was helpful to be reflective as to how I am using the skills.
16. You made me think about Cognitive Coaching. I reviewed my notes. It has made me a better person. This took it off the shelf.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Train more staff so there is easier access to trained coaches, possibly to include non-certified staff would be beneficial.
- Build in time during the workday for Cognitive Coaching training and practice.
- Involve other staff on a broad level, even with awareness of the coaching skills and terminology would help to broaden the awareness of Cognitive Coaching.
- Clear up confusion with the evaluation process so teachers are more comfortable taking the lead. This will take time, but staff believe that this is needed.
- Continue to explore connections between staff participation in Cognitive Coaching and increased student achievement.

Although the data collected in this study provide feedback pertaining to the impact of participation in Cognitive Coaching training on participants and on the Johnston Community School District, additional study might be considered. It might be helpful to interview an equal number of staff members who have never participated in the training to better study their perceptions and opinions about the effects of the training on their colleagues. It might also be helpful to interview all administrators to study more specifically how they are using the skills from

the training.

In the future, it might be helpful to research the impact on the community by involving parents in a study or to study in more depth. It would also be informative to conduct a comparison study of the impact on students who work with staff who have and have not been trained. This research might follow staff and students over time to better study the long-term impact.

These additional research areas will assist the Johnston district with its continuing effort to determine how, concretely, the Cognitive Coaching training is affecting the staff, students, parents, community, and the district.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER AND SURVEY

November 5, 1999

Dear Johnston Staff:

I am very excited about working with the Johnston staff to learn about the impact that Cognitive Coaching training has had on participants and on the Johnston school district. This is a topic I am very interested in, and I selected the Johnston district because I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you during the training sessions over the last few years. I respect the time and financial commitment that is required by the training and believe that it is important to "reflect" on what this experience has meant for you and your colleagues. The information I collect will be used to help the Johnston district to make informed decisions about future participation and application of the Cognitive Coaching skills.

As much as I hope that you will agree to participate in my study, I know how very busy you are. If you decide not to be a part of this study, just check "no," complete question number five and return the attached survey to me at Heartland. There will be no further requests or repercussions. This is strictly voluntary. Similarly, if you agree to participate and then change your mind, there will be no problem. The information, including your name will be kept confidential. You will be assigned a number for purposes of record keeping for the study. At the conclusion of my study, I will summarize the information as a group with careful consideration to respect the confidentiality of the participants. If you do participate, it might be necessary for me to contact you after our conversation for clarification purposes only.

If you do agree to participate, I ask that you fill out the brief survey attached to help me schedule our reflective conversation and to determine some basic information about your participation in Cognitive Coaching. After you return your survey to me, I will contact you to set up a time when it would be convenient to meet. During our meeting, we will have about a 20-30 minute reflective conversation about your coaching experiences and perceptions. Since you have been through the training, the format will be familiar and hopefully, very comfortable for you. I will need to tape the conversation, since I will take few if any notes during our talk.

Please consider being a part of this study and return the survey sheet to me by van mail at Heartland AEA before November 19. I would like to conduct the interviews during the time period from Nov. 22 - Feb. 1. I appreciate your taking the time to review my letter and thank you.

Sincerely,

Helene J. Kaplan

Cognitive Coaching Impact Survey for Johnston Community School
District Staff

Name:_____Study Number:_____

Check one (_)

I am willing to participate in your study of the impact of Cognitive Coaching. (Please answer the rest of this survey and return.)

I am not able to participate in your study. (Please answer #5 only and return.)

School:_____

School Phone:_____

E-mail:_____

Times when it would be most convenient to participate (about 30 minutes needed; may include before school, after school or during planning time). Please list all possible:

Before School on: _____(days) at
_____(time)

After School on: _____(days) at
_____(time)

During the school day on:
_____(days) at
_____(time)

5. Please check all that you have participated in and the number of times:

Activity	**Number of Times**	**When?**
Cognitive Coaching Training		
Mentor/Mentee Program as Mentor		
Mentor/Mentee Program as Mentee		
Follow-up sessions		
Evaluation Using Cognitive Coaching Maps		

APPENDIX B

LETTER FROM PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Excellence in Education

Johnston Community School District

P.O. Box 10
Johnston, Iowa 50131-0010

Administration Building
515-278-0470
(Fax) 515-278-5884

High School
515-278-0449
(Fax) 515-276-5795

Middle School
515-278-0476
(Fax) 515-278-0130

Wallace Elementary
515-278-6977
(Fax) 515-278-9894

Beaver Creek Elementary
515-278-6228
(Fax) 515-278-1049

Lawson Elementary
515-278-0478
(Fax) 515-278-4851

Activities/Athletics
515-278-2407
(Fax) 515-276-5795

Community Education
515-278-0552
(Fax) 515-278-0130

Kids/Teen Connection
515-278-0335
(Fax) 515-278-0130

Food Service
515-278-0278
(Fax) 515-278-6303

Transportation Office
515-278-8149
(Fax) 515-278-1320

Maintenance
515-278-5874
(Fax) 515-278-1320

To: Cognitive Coaching Participants

From: Jim Casey

Re: Analysis of Impact

Date: November 1, 1999

Over the last three years, 56 individuals from the Johnston Community School District have completed the seven day Cognitive Coaching Workshop. Most of these individuals have also assisted in the mentor-mentee program integrating the planning conversation map, collection of observational data, and the reflective conversation map. One of the concerns over the last three years has been the lack of data validating the impact of the training compared to the costs associated with the program. We have been fortunate for the last two years to have a grant from the State of Iowa that has covered all expenses, but this is on the verge of extinction. We feel strongly the need to find a way to measure the effectiveness of the training, if we are to continue financial support.

This fall, Ms. Helene Kaplan, a school consultant from Heartland, AEA, approached the district with a research project for her specialist program at Drake. She has proposed to do a follow-up study on the cognitive coaching program in the Johnston Community School District. The methodology would include interviewing approximately 25 individuals using the reflective map from the Cognitive Coaching model as a template for collecting data. All participants would be selected randomly, and responses would be kept anonymous. The interviews would be taped and transposed looking for commonalities and differences across responses. The questions would push individuals to reflect on the uses of the training in one's personal and professional life and to give the district a better grasp of the impact of the training across the district.

Ms. Kaplan has proposed to contact individuals over the next three months to establish a time for an interview. The interview will last no longer than an hour. Please be aware she has been given district permission to contact you. Any assistance you can give is greatly appreciated. Upon the completion of the study, Ms. Kaplan will share her findings with the district administrative team. Since she has also offered to share the results with any interested party, an additional meeting could be established for the interview group if desired.

Thank you for your time and efforts in this matter. It does give us the opportunity to measure the effectiveness of training. This is very critical as we continue to make choices with our limited resources.

"Together Everybody Accomplishes More"